

1C. FETAL, PERINATAL AND MATERNAL DEATHS

FETAL DEATHS (STILLBIRTHS)

The fetal death ratio dropped by 2.6 percent from 7.7 fetal deaths per 1,000 live births in 1998, to 7.5/1,000 in 1999 (**Figure 1C-1, Table 1C-3**). There was a slight increase from 1998 to 1999 in the fetal death ratio calculated for fetal deaths of at least 500 grams (**Table 1C-5**).

It was recommended in 1988* that statistical tabulations for comparisons of fetal mortality within the United States exclude fetal deaths of less than 500 g. Beginning in 1989, the data in Tables 1C-4 and 1C-5 are focused on fetal deaths of more than 500 g.

The Black fetal death ratio (calculated for fetal deaths of 500+ grams) increased in 1999 by 20.8 percent to 5.8 per 1,000 live births. The American Indian fetal death ratio declined from 5.2/1,000 in 1998 to 4.9/1,000 in 1999.

The year 2000 health objective set by the U.S. Public Health Service is to reduce the fetal death ratio to no more than 5 per 1,000 live births. A 33.3 percent reduction of Arizona's fetal death ratio is required to achieve this objective (**Figure 1C-1**).

*Standard Terminology for Reporting of Reproductive Health Statistics in the United States. **Public Health Reports** September-October 1988, Vol.103, No.5

PERINATAL MORTALITY

Perinatal mortality refers to death of a fetus of at least 20 weeks gestational age or of a child 28 days or younger. The perinatal death ratio (II), defined as the sum of infant deaths of less than 28 days and fetal deaths per 1,000 live births, decreased by 4 percent from 12.5 per 1,000 live births in 1998 to 12.0 in 1999. (**Figure 1C-2, Table 1C-3**). The perinatal death ratio (III), defined as death of a fetus of at least 20 weeks gestational age or death of an infant less than 7 days, decreased by a similar amount (3.5 percent) from 1998 to 1999 (**Table 1C-3**). Fetal deaths accounted for 68 percent of all perinatal deaths (III) in 1997 compared to 55.7 percent in 1989.

MATERNAL MORTALITY

Maternal mortality declined from a peak of 8 deaths in 1996, to 5 deaths in 1997 and 2 deaths in 1998 (**Table 1C-1**). In 1999, three deaths of Arizona resident women were attributed to complications of pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium (**Table 1C-2**). Two women were within 35 to 39 years of age and one was 34 years old (**Table 1C-1**).

The causes of maternal deaths in the State in 1999 have included *complications of the puerperium* (2 deaths) and *complications occurring in the course of labor and delivery* (1 death).